

April 6, 2005

The Honorable Bill Nelson  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

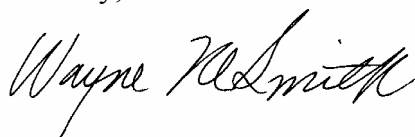
Dear Senator Nelson,

On behalf of the Florida Hospital Association, which represents over 215 hospitals and health systems throughout the state, I am writing to express our support for the *Advance Directives Improvement and Education Act of 2005* (S 347). The legislation would take important steps to improve individuals' access to information about end-of-life health care options should they become incapacitated and not be able make decisions for themselves.

With advances in medical technology and extended life expectancy, it is increasingly important for all Americans, especially seniors, to prepare advance directives to make end-of-life health care decisions. By taking these steps, patients – and their families and caregivers – will be better prepared to address the often medically complex and difficult issues that may confront them in making these decisions.

Hospitals are committed to providing high quality care to all patients across the health care continuum. As part of their role as leaders in the health care community, it is incumbent upon us to ensure that patients understand their options and ensure that their wishes are respected. Your legislation is an important step in this process.

Sincerely,



Wayne NeSmith  
President

cc: The Honorable Richard G. Lugar  
The Honorable Jay Rockefeller